

Release of Patient Information

TELEPHONE INQUIRIES:

Telephone inquiry regarding laboratory results is a particularly challenging area. CHI Health Laboratory has policies ensuring the appropriate release in accordance with HIPAA which protects health information. While committed to compliance regarding HIPAA regulations, we strive to maintain practical communication that satisfies the information needs of our customers.

To release patient results in response to a telephone inquiry, one of the following unique identifiers will be required from any non-lab personnel (staff to clients):

- CHI Health Medical Record Number
- Physician Office / Clinic Medical Record Number
- Physician Office / Clinic Laboratory Code (Assigned by CHI Health Laboratory)
- Identification by caller that they are, in fact, the "Ordering Physician" identified on the lab orders

In the event that the staff initiating the telephone inquiry cannot produce any of the above information, the lab personnel will ask the caller to remain on the line while they contact the client to obtain verbal authorization to respond to the inquiry for results. The Customer must give the unique identifying information to individuals calling for the information.

Occasionally, CHI Health Laboratory receives direct requests for release of information from patients. In such cases, we will fax or mail an appropriate **Authorization for Release of Information** form to the patient. Upon receipt of an executed Authorization form, CHI Health Laboratory will release information only to the extent specifically authorized in the release form.

FACSIMILE:

Use of facsimile for transmitting Protected Health Information (PHI) to and from customers varies greatly from facsimile being the primary means for transmitting results and patient information to facsimile being used only occasionally to address urgent needs.

CHI Health Laboratory provide to the customer a "Fax Verification Form" which must be completed in order to fax laboratory results and other patient information to our customers. This verification of the receiving fax number must be documented every year.

All fax machines utilized by CHI Health Laboratory for sending and receiving individually identifiable healthcare information (PHI) are subject to the following policies:

- The fax number is a dedicated fax machine only utilized by personnel directly involved in handling of PHI and each such person is subject to a confidentiality policy that complies with all applicable HIPAA regulations.
- All information received on fax machines receiving information from customers will be handled in a confidential manner compliant with all applicable HIPAA regulations.
- All such fax machines receiving information from customers will be located in portions of the laboratory that satisfy both the applicable privacy and security requirement of HIPAA.
- CHI Health Laboratory will fax PHI only to fax numbers that have been verified by customers as being the fax number that the customer has authorized the lab to fax PHI.

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